ELIADA INTERVIEW - JOHN WARD

INTERVIEWEE	JOHN WARD
INTERVIEWER	CLIFF DAVID
TRANSCRIBER	PAT FITZPATRICK
PLACE OF INTERVIEW	HOME OF INTERVIEWEE
DATE OF INTERVIEW	APRIL 11, 2001

CLIFF DAVID: Today is April 11th, 2001. It's 3 p.m. in the afternoon. We are talking with Mr. John Ward at his home at 392--

JOHN WARD: Eliada Home Road.

CD: --Eliada Home Road. Mr. Ward, thank you for taking the time to sit down and talk with me today. Could you please give me your full name?

JW: John Andrew Ward, Sr.

CD: And, Mr. Ward, what year and what's the date of your birth?

JW: October 5th, 1913.

CD: And were you born here in the Asheville area?

JW: Yes, out at Bingham Heights. And I've been raised the rest of my life right down the road here.

JW: Now, Mr. Ward, you were just telling me about how your father owned all the land--

JW: My grandfather.

CD: Your grandfather. What was your grandfather's name?

JW: Mark Smith.

CD: And you said you owned the land right by--that included the graveyard in the area.

JW: Yes. Uh-huh.

CD: Tell me a little bit about the times when you would have to dig the graveyards of the--

JW: Well, when I was a young boy, I helped him do his little farming. And then whenever he wasn't, he'd take care of the graveyard. When somebody wanted to be buried, well, then we'd mark off a place and we'd dig the grave. So would I. And then when they was buried, we'd cover them up. Kept the fence up around the graveyard. Kept the graves filled up. Anything to do with the graves, we done it. Mowing was done, we done it ourselves.

CD: Were those people who couldn't afford to be buried other places?

JW: Some of them was of the neighborhood. Some of them moved in. One time the Smiths owned to join the Eliada Home Road to Craggy. Do you know where Craggy is?

CD: That's a long way.

JW: At one time, the Smith brothers owned all this property through here.

CD: Uh-huh. So, did you--I guess your grandfather and your father, as well, were associates and friendly with Reverend Compton.

JW: Oh, yeah. My grandfather give him--let him use his spring down there to pump water up on the mountain to use for Eliada Home for years.

CD: So they would pump the water from the spring up to that big cistern they have on the property now?

JW: Yes, that's right.

CD: How would they do that?

JW: Well, they put in electric wires down to it and put in a pump, electric pump, then put the water lines up the other step. It would get full and then it would cut off. He never did charge them a dime for that, for the use of his spring.

CD: That was very generous for the orphanage.

JW: It sure was. And I knew Mr. Compton well.

CD: Tell me a little bit about Mr. Compton.

JW: He was kind of a tall fellow. And he was so generous to people that didn't want their children. He'd take them in. Camp meeting started the first day of August and when he'd open that August 1st day, on the Sunday morning or Sunday evening, whenever they had their service, say at 11 o'clock in the morning, and he'd come out with a little baby, and he'd say, "Here's our latest addition". That was great, to me, to see somebody take the children that nobody wanted, and he didn't turn down nobody.

And, of course, I had three second cousins up there, and they were raised up there. I've been trying to find out what one of them's name. I want to go see her.

CD: There was one that I know that was named Ann Duckett.

JW: Was she married to Fred Kerfees?

CD: Fred Kerfees, uh-huh.

JW: Yeah, that's the one I want.

CD: I can put you in touch with her, if you'd like.

JW: Yeah. I'd like to get in touch and call in. I'd like to talk to her.

CD: She lives just down the road from here.

JW: Yeah. I thought so, often.

CD: Well, I'd be happy to do that for you.

JW: Yeah, because I want to see her. I know them both. Well, I knew him better than I did her.

CD: So did you know Fred when he was growing up at the orphanage, as well?

JW: Yeah, I knew him up there. That's where I knew him. And I always thought that was an odd name, you know, Fred Kerfees. It was different than a lot of people here.

CD: There was always a mechanic named Clyde.

JW: Oh, yeah. And she had another sister, and I forget what her name is. It was her brother. And I saw him a lot. He used to come down to my mom and dad's because he was their--well, my second cousin. Their mother and daddy, they decided they didn't want them, so they then took off and went to Washington, DC. They was capable, I thought, to take care of them. They just decided they didn't want anything to do with them.

See, Reverend Compton, he didn't turn nobody down. He'd take them, feed them and take care of them.

CD: Now, Mr. Ward, you were born in 1913.

JW: Yeah.

CD: So, what are your earliest memories of Eliada Home?

JW: Well, about him. He'd come--if there was a telephone wire broke down, he'd come down to the house to use the phone to call in.

CD: Reverend Compton?

JW: Yeah. There was a single line went up through there. Back then there was trees on there. So my dad's was down to the main line. There wasn't no trees. So we didn't have no trouble with trees falling on it. But there was just constantly some tree or something breaking on his telephone line. And it was easier for him to come to our house than it was for him to

drive over to Asheville, because it was dirt road and sometimes it got almost impossible to travel on. So he'd come to the house and use our phone. He learned my name and I remember, our house, we had a house down there and it burned down about 1919 and we had to go over and rent one in West Asheville till we built another one. It's still standing down there.

So after we got it built, why, we was living in it and here come [??] Compton and with a poor little soul, she was crippled up. But she brought my mother a quilt she says she made for herself by hand. And she said, I can't get out of this buggy, but I did bring you something. Maybe it will keep y'all warm". My mother, she cherished that quilt. I don't know whatever become of it. After my mother died, my sister, older sister, she got everything in the house. So she must have destroyed it. I don't know if anybody got ahold of it.

CD: Now, you're referring to Reverend Compton's first wife.

JW: Yeah.

CD: Tell me a little bit about her.

JW: She was just a little small woman. A buggy run away and throwed her out. She was always crippled.

CD: When did that happen?

JW: I don't know what year it was. It was before 1918. 19, somewhere along in there. Of course, Pauline said he used to bring her out to see the penss[?], her brother, Pauline's daddy. And they'd drive in the buggy all the way out to Waynesville.

CD: Is that where she was living?

JW: Yeah, they lived on-- Did you ever know where High Street is?

CD: Huh-uh.

JW: That would be on Waynesville where--I don't know--Saunooke--Hazelwood. It used to be on the Hazelwood. When you get to Hazelwood, you went to the rubber plant, you turned to the right. You go up High Street and Pauline was raised up on the mountain.

CD: Does Reverend Compton's first wife still have family up there? Or have family around here?

JW: I never knew of anybody. I just knowed her. That's all.

CD: Was she living with Dr. Compton up at the cottage?

JW: No, they lived in the house between--Mama Ada lived in the cottage, even before she was married. Mama Ada, she lived in the little house between this road that goes here and the big house with the big parlors, where the girls lived.

CD: The little girls' dormitory?

JW: Yes. And there was a house down there. That's where she lived. She moved her out into West Asheville, Factory Hill or somewhere. James Compton, he was--lived there and he took care of her, one of the boys, he went to Eliada. His name was James Compton.

CD: I've heard his name before. I used to know him with Samuel Fore. Does the name Samuel Fore ring a bell? He was a friend of James Compton's.

JW: No. I knowed Robert somebody. The first one I remember up there was John--I forget now. Grace Edwards was one of the girls up there, the first one I met. John Freshair. I never heard a name like that. He was full grown and he was going to school. I walked back and forth to school with him.

See, we never had a bus in our lives. I didn't, going to school. We'd walk, the girls and boys together, and we'd walk down to school, and we'd

come back in the evenings. I lived down here, so I'd go on home and then go off.

CD: Let me see if I understand this. So the first Mrs. Compton was injured in a buggy accident.

JW: Yes.

CD: And then she--up until that point, was she living with Dr. Compton, with Reverend Compton?

JW: I think they were down there in that middle house, kind of down there.

CD: Uh-huh. And then in 1919, the bungalow, the blue house on the top of the hill was built.

JW: I didn't know what year it was built.

CD: That was 1919. And did the first Mrs. Compton ever live in that house, to your recollection?

JW: After he married Edith.

CD: Okay. After he married Mama Edith.

JW: Mama Edith.

CD: Do you know when they got married?

JW: No, I don't know what year. Of course, after his first wife left, why, I think he kind of lost out.

CD: Uh-huh. There were a lot of people that were upset by what happened.

JW: Yeah. Back then, you didn't accept the second wife. Now, you do.

CD: Well, do you remember when the tabernacle was built?

JW: Yeah. I went to the old tabernacle. Ahead of this one. It fell down, rotted out. And it stood there just past that house that's on the corner.

CD: Tell me what you remember about that tabernacle, that's got just the columns there left now.

JW: That's where I met my wife.

CD: Did you meet her at one of the camp meetings?

JW: Yes. She just lived over on the Old Leicester Highway. I lived down here and I had never saw her before. Went up there one night, around the bank. Come in with my first cousin. We was looking for a girl, you know. We saw some sitting there, so we set in behind them. We was sitting in behind them. I told him, I said, "Now I'm going to take this one with the light hair. You can have the one in the back".

I tapped her on the shoulder and I said, "Can I walk you home tonight?" And she peeked out from under her hat, looked at me and said, "Yes".

So after the camp meeting was over, they was in the row ahead of us, the seats. You always went out then down. And that row went out ahead of me and then my row went out an exit row. By the time I got down there, her and her sisters took off with a young fellow that I knew. That's the reason he was taking them home, because her daddy told him to take his kids, daughters up there, for him to bring them home. He worked with her daddy. So he took them home.

So the next night they was there. And I said, "They ain't going to get by us tonight. Let's go sit down by them". We went and sit down by them. Then I met them. This was about 1931, because we got married in 1934.

CD: Let's see. When they built that tabernacle in 1921, you were about eight years old.

JW: Yes.

CD: And you remember them actually building that?

[SOUND GETTING WORSE; AN OVERALL ROAR]

JW: Oh, yes. Warder was building it, name of Fordham.

CD: Warder, uh-huh.

JW: And he was the first that ever had wood over the top. And people come from everywhere to see that because they had every other building sealed. You know how far those columns apart. Well, that was [?]. He knew how to put them together and fresh it at the top, without having a center post. He didn't have a post like here and there and there, but it was just solid top over it.

CD: Was Warder a local contractor?

JW: Yeah, he lived in West Asheville. And people from everywhere come to see that because how he had built it, structurally, you know. How it held that roof up. I've killed a million bats up there. Bats were bad to get under it and we was afraid of bats coming down and bite somebody. So we'd take a thing and shoot them, go up there and you'd shoot them out.

Have you ever seen a bat?

CD: Oh, yeah.

JW: Yeah, we'd take that thing and shoot them. We was afraid of them biting somebody. Back then they said that bats were poison.

CD: So you would help get that building ready for camp meetings, I take it, as a young boy.

JW: I didn't help. I just attended. This man that used to come over there every camp meeting in the morning and he'd have the camp meetings before for kids. Uncle Charlie would come down there and then I tried to be there every morning, because if you read certain many chapters, he'd give you a testament. And you'd read so much and he'd give you a little trinket. Then you treasured them trinkets.

CD: Tell me about Uncle Charlie.

JW: He was sweet to everybody. Everybody loved Uncle Charlie. And everybody went every morning, kids in the neighborhood, besides ones that was living up at the campgrounds, we'd be right there. But everybody loved Uncle Charlie. We called him Uncle Charlie.

CD: Do you remember--I'm going to mention the names of some of the evangelists who went there. There was a Max Werthheimer? He was a converted rabbi.

JW: Yeah, I remember him.

CD: What do you remember about him?

JW: I just noticed he was kind of odd, you know. And I was trying to think of the other one's name. They had him up one time for being a spy. But they proved he wasn't after they jailed him.

CD: Who was this?

JW: I wish I could think of his name.

CD: Who did they say he was spying for?

JW: Germany.

CD: So this was during the second world war?

JW: Yeah.

CD: Did he have a German-sounding name?

JW: Yeah, but I can't think of it. Agnes might remember.

CD: Where did they jail him?

JW: Well, New York, Washington, somewhere. He wasn't from here. He just came and attended a camp meeting.

CD: Was he an evangelist?

JW: Yeah. He was a good speaker, you know.

CD: Was it Fran Meyer? It wasn't Gerald Winrod?

JW: Yep, Gerald Winrod.

CD: Gerald Winrod?

JW: Yeah. Yeah. And they thought he was a spy. And I know in the paper one time they had that he had been a spy. But they proved he wasn't. He was just preaching the Lord.

CD: And they actually put him in jail up in New York for that?

JW: Yeah. Wherever he lived.

CD: Well, he was the head of the Defender movement, and he was a strong anti-communist. I remember reading that about him.

JW: Well, that's the reason they grabbed him, you know.

CD: Do you remember seeing Gerald Winrod preach?

JW: Oh, yeah.

CD: Tell me about that.

JW: I saw him, listened to him many a time. Sometimes he'd stay the whole ten days. The camp meeting just lasted ten days, first of August to the tenth of August. I know us boys, the girls up there, we'd dare not pay any attention to them because we felt like they was safer. Because they was up there, they couldn't help being up there. But Reverend Compton would take them in. A lot of them was from broken homes. Some of them, families didn't want them and he'd take them in.

Then they had a dairy up there. And I'd go up there lots when they had the dairy. They had Guernsey cows. And I'd go up to the barns, the boys, to feed, milk with them. I didn't milk but they had a milker. They had to prepare them to milk them and everything. They'd take the milk into the milk house, stood right next to the barn.

And then later they went to Southern Milk. Had a delivery man, Mr. Ford, he lived in ____, came up there. He delivered milk till they quit

having milk. And Mr. McCrary was the head of the dairy that was there. And he had two boys.

CD: There was one named Porter McCrary.

JW: Yeah, Porter was--he was in charge of the boys for years up there. He had a dormitory. He looked after the boys. I can't think of the other two boys. Just one of them worked up there and one of them was crippled. So they lived up Old Leicester on County Home Road. Had a little old store to work in.

CD: Do you remember going to the old main building?

JW: Yeah, I used to have to deliver ice down there.

CD: Oh, yeah?

JW: Yeah, there's a fellow hauled ice in a truck with canvas throwed over to keep it from melting. And he'd stop by and he used to move people around. Muse, Ernest Muse. He had his truck and he moved furniture but then he hauled a lot of ice. He used to leave ice down at our house. He'd say, "Come on, John. Go with me". We'd go and deliver ice to Eliada. And I'd go with him to help him carry ice, carry it in. We'd call it "the big house".

Then when camp meeting was coming on, we'd put ice in the kitchen and I seen the girls in there. We dare not say nothing to them. They'd just--I figured they was angels, because they was there, they couldn't help it.

CD: They had some pretty girls there, too, didn't they?

JW: Yeah, they did. A little later on, 1934, I graduated and this one girl, her name was Stella Stevens. And Miss Green called me one time, said, "John, I want to ask you a favor". She said, "I knowed you years and years. You're a good boy. Would you mind to come up here and take Stella to the junior/senior prom?" And said, "I know that you'll take good care of her".

And so the time come I went up there and picked her up, escorted her down and when it was over I brought her back. And I walked her up the steps of the big house. I don't know what become of Stella after that. But I've always been honored for somebody to ask me to take one of them from the orphanage. It give me kind of a big head, kind of [laughing], being praised to go that much with somebody, had never happene3d before.

CD: Well, tell me about Miss Grace Green.

JW: Who?

CD: Grace Green? Miss Green.

JW: I guess she was in charge of it for years up there. I didn't know really too much about her other than I saw her at camp meeting and all. But I thought of her honoring me to go and be the first and only one that took any of the girls from Eliada without a chaperone.

CD: The community, Asheville, always supported Eliada, has always supported Eliada, felt strongly about what Reverend Compton was doing out there.

JW: Yeah, they--he just had to kind of preach--he could go on and preach up there, but he went off and preached in other states and then he'd bring--sometimes on the train, come down to [?], and they'd bring stuff and unloaded clothes and stuff. And then they'd take a wagon and go down and get it and bring it up.

'Cause this old road was so bad sometimes I remember down the road here a little piece they got stuck with the team of mules they had a load of manure, but they balked. And they couldn't get them mules to go on. So they took a mare out of the single wagon, yoked her to it and she tried to pull and the mules didn't help her. So she went to keeling. She keeled over, she got out of that harness and then they took her out and put her back to their

wagon. She went on. But she couldn't move that two-horse wagon and them mules, too. So she wasn't going to be [?]. Her name was Nell. And I believe Nell was the one that belonged to Miss Thompson[?], down to the house, with the quilt that time. See, everything, the roads and everything was dirt then for years. My mother, she thought a lot of Miss Thompson.

Mother and Daddy were married the 15th day of March, 1909. My sister Helen was born 1911 and I was born in 1913. Finally there was six of us all together.

CD: Do you remember, there were a couple of people from the Asheville area that played prominent roles in Eliada back in the early days. There was a Dewey Holland. Do you remember him? He was a barber in Asheville. He was the barber at camp meetings, he and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Holland.

JW: I know one time Huckington's[?] wife sung up there. He'd bring her up in a motorcycle, on the sidecar. He worked for the railroad. I knew him after I went to the railroad.

CD: What was his name?

JW: Huckington. Bill, I think we called him. I believe it was W. L., William L. Huckington. He had a boy and I went to school with him. He'd bring her up there and she'd sing. And sometimes they'd stay at the campgrounds the ten days. And he'd go up with that motorcycle to see her when he wasn't working.

CD: Do you remember a Gay Green?

JW: Yeah, mayor. One time he was mayor of Asheville.

CD: Tell me about him. He was also very involved with Eliada.

JW: Yeah, he done a lot of good work for Eliada. And J. D. Earle done a lot of work with Eliada. He built a big chicken house up there once and furnished the chickens.

CD: He owned Earle Chesterfield, didn't he?

JW: Yeah, Chesterfield Mills.

CD: What was J. D. Earle like?

JW: He was very generous with Eliada. He built a building and all and them boys steal the eggs, sell them. And some of them were pretty wild. And some of them was real nice. We'd meet with the Eliada boys, go over on the mountain on Sunday and play football, tag.

CD: Where would you play?

JW: Over on _____ Road, there's a field over there, over ____ Road. Broom sage and little old pine trees. John James owned the property and we'd go over there and play. That's the reason I got to know the boys pretty well.

CD: Pretty rough games of football? You played tag football or tackle football?

JW: Kind of touch and tag. You just had your regular clothes on. You never even thought about a uniform. You'd go to Sunday School in the morning then that evening you'd meet up there, play tag football or whatever. It would get pretty rough sometimes. And Preacher Compton, he'd let them come over. He knew everybody was going over there. He done that until my uncle told him that, he said, come see about us. So him and John Smith, Mr. Compton, he come over there. We was up on the cut bank watching what was going on down in the cut. So he said, "Boys, you can't be doing this. You might get shot". [Some unintelligible.]

CD: Did you spend a lot of time up on the mountain, up on Slicky Mountain?

JW: Yeah, I walked I walked every--you could see footprints. You could find them all over Eliada property. So I was all over it. He'd let me go anywhere I wanted to go on that mountain. They had chestnut trees on across the mountains. Go over there and hunt w. You've heard of chestnuts, haven't you?

And sometimes we'd go up on the mountain, they had two breeders[?] up there at one time. And they had one of those buildings where if you go up on the top and open all around.

CD: Tabernacle?

JW: No. Little. Sometimes people have them in their yard. They had one up on the mountain and had a swing in it. Sometimes we'd go up and swing in that swing.

But the old house, it just sit, the house. Rotting down and falling just part of it left. But this here swing place was still there. It had a shingle top on it.

CD: So the Slicky house was on top of the mountain?

JW: Yeah, almost on the top. Just coming around where the reservoir is. You see, at one time they had a pretty good road around that mountain. You had to go all the way around and come around the back and then up on top. And at one time, Mr. Compton had a--I think it was a Pierce Arrow or some car, touring car. And he'd drive up and down the road. I know it had a trunk on the back, two wheels on the fenders. One on the fender on one side and one on the other. That was an odd-looking thing going then. And then it got so when Ronnie took it around, and drove it around the mountain, that road goes around the mountain, went off the road down below where there's

a ditch. Set there till it rotted. Couldn't sell it. It wouldn't one, why, I know you had to be careful with it up on the mountain. [Two or three sentences unintelligible.] And those boys, we didn't fool around where he was at. He was too big for us.

CD: What was his name?

JW: Sequel.

CD: S-e-q-u-e-l? Sequel.

JW: Yeah.

CD: And you were just running around on top of the mountain by yourself?

JW: Well, after he got old, they turned him out. But when he was young, why they kept him in the barn down there.

CD: So after he was old they let him wander around until he died?

JW: He died up on the mountain. They let him just retire and let him live out his life.

CD: When was that? When did they retire him, do you remember?

JW: I don't remember. Must have been around early thirties.

CD: Did he ever give the boys any trouble?

JW: Reverend Compton?

CD: No, Sequel.

JW: No, they respected him. His size. Anyone that big. Mr. McCrary took care of him while we had them Guernsey cows. He was a Guernsey. He won several ribbons. They take him down, ship him down to Robin and to the fair.

CD: They must have had a lot of blueberry and raspberry bushes up there?

JW: Yeah, on the mountain.

CD: Uh-huh.

JW: I picked blackberries some. And one time over on the side next to Ben Lippen they had a swimming pool up there for the boys. That's the only place they had to go swimming. It was just built out of dirt, you know.

CD: There used to be a swimming hole right back down that way. Maybe on your grandfather's property, wasn't there?

JW: Yeah, later on there was one down over here one time. It was up here and it was on Eliada's property. But the water run out. It run down Grandfather's property and down.

CD: Did there used to be a stream up on Slicky Mountain?

JW: No, there's a little bit of water over on this side. There's a spring somewhere up there. It wasn't very full. But when it got down to over here, me and my first cousin, we built us a farm over there. It took three days to get down there. There wasn't much water coming down, so he couldn't pump water from [??].

But that spring my Grandpa Smith had, it was a good bold spring. And he wouldn't charge him a dime for his use of that. Just told him to get water. He had to put a pump in. He said, "I can't put a pump in on your water". So he built a pump house over there, run the electric wires.

At that time, we didn't have electric wires over here. It was an odd electric system. They had electric wires over there and to Eliada and this road didn't have no electric. We had lamps, oil lamps. When we got over on the Old County Home Road, they had electric wires over there. But we was in the dark over here.

CD: So you were born in 1913. There was the original building, the big house, burned down in 1914 and you would have been too young to remember that.

JW: Yeah, I didn't remember it.

CD: Do you ever remember anybody talking about that at all?

JW: I might have heard Mother and Daddy talk about it. See, my daddy worked for the railroad. He went down there in 1911. He and Mr. Compton were good friends. Everybody back then was friends. We may not see each other often, but everybody liked each other.

CD: Where was the house that you grew up in on Eliada Home Road?

JW: Huh?

CD: Where was the house you grew up in on Eliada Home Road?

JW: Right down here.

CD: Just a little bit further down?

JW: Yeah.

CD: Did Dr. Compton ever come by for dinner over at your house?

JW: No, the only thing he come by, he'd come use the phone. He'd maybe come down in the buggy or a old car or whatever he had. It was easy to go into town. The road wasn't too good at times.

CD: What was the main road to get back into Asheville back then?

JW: You went down here and then you got kind Emma Road.

CD: So you had to go down Eliada Home Road?

JW: Yeah, it comes into Emma Road.

CD: And then take Emma Road?

JW: And then on into Asheville. You'd go to Emma and sometimes you'd turn right and go across Louisiana into West Asheville.

CD: Was Emma Road paved back then, too?

JW: Nooo. Nooo. One time, when I was going to school, they had part of Emma Road black-topped. Then they had a T Model Ford truck, and it had a bunch of stuff on it. Then me and a third cousin, we was coming

from school. And he said, "Let's hop on that truck". He was older than me. So he got in on that truck and he got me by the hand and was going to help me up. And one foot slipped out and I was dragged and it took the meat off of my knee and I had one of my daddy's old handerkechiefs and I tied it around my knee. When I got home, they asked me, "What happened to your knee?" And I said, "I fell down". I didn't tell them I was trying to [??}.

CD: Well, back then, where was the hospital that you'd go to if you were sick or something happened to you?

JW: They had one over Asheville, _____ Hospital, over there on... I believe some doctor's still got offices in that building. And then they had a hospital over there off of Charlotte Street. I forget the name of it. Memorial Mission I think had one over there at one time. And then they went over there and built that and St. Joe's Hospital.

CD: Did they ever have, or did you ever know of any ginseng that was up on the mountain?

JW: I knew some Jenkins that lived over on the Old County Home Road.

CD: Not Jenkins but the root ginseng.

JW: Oh, ginseng.

CD: That's the--you make tea with it.

JW: Oh, yeah. We used to go over there on Ben Lippen.

CD: So it used to grow wild up on the mountain?

JW: Yeah. Yeah, I'd go up and get it. And some of them dug a lot of it. Folks would dry and sell it. One time over on Broadway they had a big herb house over there and a thing like that, you'd take and sell it and they'd buy anything to make medicine out of.

CD: What was the name of the herb house? Do you remember?

JW: I don't remember. You'd get enough sassafras roots, you'd take them there. They'd buy them.

CD: I bet some of the boys in the orphanage made a little money on the side doing that, as well.

JW: Yeah, they could kill rabbits and they'd take them down where there was some colored people lived. They'd go down there and they'd sell them rabbits. They told one time they caught a cat and they skinned it and took it down there and sold it to them for rabbits. Said they wouldn't buy no more from them when they found out it was a cat. I know some of them boys was pretty rough. They had a little old store down at the corner of Emma Road and Hazel Mill Road. Well, there's a house still there. The old lady, she's old, and her son put her in a little old grocery store and keep her busy. And them boys would go in there and some of us would go in there with them just to watch them. And one of them was over here and they'd find something, "So and so, look at this. I want to see about that". The other one's over there putting stuff in their pocket, cigars and cigarettes, candy. Then when they leave they come on up the road laughing, "Do you want some candy?" "Do you want a cigarette?" "No, I don't care for it". I knowed about it because I saw them do it. I wouldn't have touched it. My daddy would have skinned me.

CD: There's a lot of boys that were rough boys.

JW: Some of them were. Some of them were just as nice as they could be. And when they was around up there, they were just as nice, but he let them get out and they was--they knew their way around.

The boys and girls, at first they walked them to school. Then later then they started going to Johnson School. Johnson School then they went--it was closer for them to go on up Old County Home Road and get on the

bus and go to [??]. Then they went to going to West Buncombe. Then in later years, then they quit and then they went to walking down then that's where I seen them girls, was down walking. I didn't see none before. I think they had to go to West Buncombe, the girls, and they always tried to keep them separate.

CD: What did they call this road here before they called it Eliada Home Road?

JW: It used to be Compton Road.

CD: That was the first name?

JW: Yeah.

CD: Then they built that road originally to get up to the orphanage.

JW: Yeah, as far back as I know, it was to here and it went on across the hill into Old County Home Road.

CD: So the road, the Eliada Road, kind of turns around that house that's right in front of the tabernacle?

JW: Yeah.

CD: And then it goes down to the Bi-Lo?

JW: Yeah.

CD: Now, back when you were a kid, did it go all the way back down to that area, as well?

JW: Yeah, it went down to the Old County Home Road.

CD: And is that now Leicester Highway?

JW: No, it's Leicester Highway now. It used to be Old County Home Road.

CD: Okay.

JW: You go on Eliada Road, it crosses Leicester Highway now, it's still Eliada Home, or the Old County Home Road. That's where it divides.

CD: And what was--what was there where the Bi-Lo and all those stores are now?

JW: That was just a field. Parris[?] had that there. [?] Parris owned that land there and then before you go across the hill, on each side belonged to Duncans. Oliver Duncan and his wife. They had a house there that burned down in, I guess, 1932 or something like that. Then they moved over on the Old County Home Road and built a house.

CD: And you know how Leicester Highway now goes all the way out to Patton Avenue? That was Old County Home Road? How far did it go in that direction?

JW: You mean-- It went over to the Old County Home. They called it Leicester [phonetic Lester[, Road, Leicester [phonetic Leecester] then back to Leicester, and then it went on. My uncle lived out there off the end.

CD: Well, what is there now where it used to be Old County Home? What's there right now?

JW: A house [Side A Ends]

CD: [Side B begins] So if I go take a left on Leicester Highway where it takes me out to Patton Avenue, what was in that area back when you were a kid?

JW: It was called the Johnson farm.

CD: So it was just a big farm.

JW: Yeah.

CD: Okay.

JW: My daddy, when he was a boy, he went there and delivered milk.

CD: And where Patton Avenue is right now, Patton Avenue was there when you were a kid, wasn't it?

JW: Well, it was Old County Home Road down to where you turn off to go to Burton Street. Just past where that beef place is, it's bearing to the right. And you had to go up Burton Street to get to West Asheville and then that was Haywood Road up there then. Old County Home Road went down through there.

CD: And all these roads were all dirt roads back when you were a kid?

JW: Oh, yeah.

CD: And it used to rain a lot back then, too, so I bet those roads were pretty tough to get around in.

JW: Oh, they were. I moved here, this wasn't paved. I moved here in 1949.

CD: So Compton used to get around in a horse and buggy?

JW: Oh, yeah. Yeah, he had it all the way out to Pauline's house, in the buggy. It took him about half a day to get there. Of course, it was 25, 30 miles.

CD: Pauline was Compton's niece?

JW: Yes.

CD: Her father was--was it Thomas Jefferson?

JW: Yes. Oh, she'd get excited whenever she talked about the Comptons. There was nothing wrong with the Comptons. Because she's a full Compton. Proud of it. Well, I just met her in 1992 and she's a full Compton all right. When Aunt Nettie died, well, they told me Compton, they said, "You get in that car and ride with us". I said, "No, I will go with somebody. I'd rather go myself". They said, "No". Bill, he said, "John, you are one of the Comptons. You get in there with all these.

I done made arrangements for that. So we went out there and back together. Then I even met her older sister. Her older sister is over at--on Beaverdam. They changed the name of it where she is now. And she's a hundred and one years old.

CD: Wow.

JW: We went to see her Sunday.

CD: This is Nettie's older--or Pauline's older sister?

JW: Yeah. Well, she had some older than her. Pauline's 86. We went to see her Sunday.

[End of Side B.]